

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, and reconsideration of the Office Action dated March 8, 2004 (Paper No. 20). Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-17 will remain pending in this application with claims 14-16 being withdrawn. The changes to the claims are fully supported by the specification and original claims. No new matter is incorporated by this Amendment.

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Claims 6, 7, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Specifically, the Office Action asserted that certain phrases in the claims lack proper antecedent basis. In response, claims 6, 7, and 11 have been amended in a manner that addresses this rejection. In addition, claims 8 and 17 have been amended to address the grammatical issue discussed in the rejection. Hence, the rejection has been accommodated and its withdrawal is respectfully requested.

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Claims 1 and 2 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as purportedly anticipated by German Patent Publication No. 41 24 869 ('869). Applicants again respectfully traverse.

Claims 3, 4, 8, 9, 11-13 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly obvious based on German Patent Publication No. 41 24 869 ('869) in view of Hellinga (U.S. Pat. No. 5,982,126).

Claims 5-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly obvious based on German Patent Publication No. 41 24 869 ('869) in view of Hellinga, and further in view of Kato (U.S. Pat. No. 5,986,420).

Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly obvious based on German Patent Publication No. 41 24 869 ('869) in view of Hellinga, and further in view of Kowall et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,563,483).

These four rejections are addressed together as similar issues apply to all three. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully traverse each rejection.

Applicants note the Examiner's comment on page 6 of the Office Action dated March 8, 2004. Specifically, the Examiner stated, "If the Applicant were to positively recite the combination of the apparatus and the vehicle, the application may be allowable." In response, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 (from which claims 2-14 and 17 all ultimately depend) so that it positively recites the combination of the apparatus and the vehicle. Hence, in the view of the amendment to claim 1 and the above remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that each rejection is overcome. Reconsideration and withdrawal of all four rejections are thus respectfully requested.

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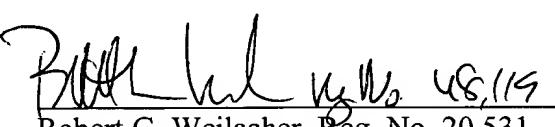
Applicants respectfully submit that this Amendment and the above remarks obviate the outstanding objection and rejection in this case, thereby placing the application in condition for immediate allowance. Allowance of this application is earnestly solicited.

If any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17 are due in connection with this filing, please charge the fees to Deposit Account No. 02-4300; Order No. 032405.061.

If an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 is necessary that is not accounted for in the papers filed herewith, such an extension is requested. The extension fee should be charged to Deposit Account No. 02-4300; Order No. 032405.061.

Respectfully submitted,
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